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"THE MILITARY PROFESSION"
Distaff Version

TONIGHT WE WIND IT ALL UP IN THIS DISTAFF SERIES OF STRATEGY SEMINARS. TOMORROW YOUR HUSBANDS WIND IT UP, TOO. I AM SURE THAT BOTH OF YOU WILL BE GLAD WHEN THEIR EXAM IS ALSO HISTORY--AND ALL OF THE INTENSE READING, TOO.

PERHAPS IT IS ONLY FAIR THAT I START TONIGHT BY EXPLAINING TO YOU WHY WE HAVE PACED YOUR HUSBANDS THROUGH THIS ROUGH COURSE IN STRATEGY; WHY WE HAVE CONCENTRATED ON CASE STUDIES OF MILITARY HISTORY.

THE BASIC REASON IS THAT THE KEY INGREDIENT TO MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM, IN MY OPINION, IS AN ABILITY TO THINK LOGICALLY, DEEPLY AND FLEXIBLY. THERE PERHAPS WAS A DAY IN MILITARY AFFAIRS WHEN ONLY A FEW MEN AT THE TOP HAD TO BE DEEP THINKERS. THE REST COULD FOLLOW STRAIGHTFORWARD AXIOMS OR DIRECTIVES. COURAGE, INITIATIVE, DARING AND LOTS OF EXPERIENCE OR TRAINING WERE OFTEN ADEQUATE. TODAY THE NEED TO THINK AND ANALYZE, EVEN ON THE BATTLEFIELD, GOES DEEPER THAN EVER BEFORE. WHAT GOOD, FOR INSTANCE, ARE EXPERIENCE AND COURAGE IN PLANNING HOW TO DETER NUCLEAR CONFLICT. NONE. IT TAKES A MAN WHO CAN ESTIMATE COMPLEX TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT,

THAT REQUIRES THE SKILLS OF A NUCLEAR PHYSICIST, A MATHEMATICIAN AND A SYSTEMS ANALYST. IT ALSO TAKES A MAN WHO CAN ESTIMATE HOW THE ENEMY WILL VIEW THE SITUATION AND WHAT WILL DETER HIM FROM ATTACKING US. THAT REQUIRES A SOCIOLOGIST AND PSYCHOLOGIST. YOUR HUSBAND MAY HAVE TO BE ALL OF THESE THINGS WRAPPED UP IN ONE. IT IS TODAY CRITICALLY IMPORTANT THAT HE BE A TRUE PROFESSIONAL.

OUR PROFESSION IS THE MANAGEMENT OF VIOLENCE. VIOLENCE IS MORE DANGEROUS TODAY THAN EVER. IF WE MANAGE WELL, THE COUNTRY WILL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE NOT TO FALL INTO THE USE OF VIOLENCE WITH ITS ATTENDANT RISKS. HENCE, WE NEED MEN LIKE YOUR HUSBANDS WHO ARE TRUE PROFESSIONALS.

HERE AT THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, WE CANNOT TRAIN THEM IN ALL OF THE SKILLS OF NUCLEAR PHYSICIST, MATHEMATICIAN, SOCIOLOGIST AND PSYCHOLOGIST. THE COMMON DENOMINATOR, THOUGH, IS CLEAR THINKING. I BELIEVE THAT OUR STRATEGY COURSE DEMANDS THIS. TO BEGIN WITH, IT PUTS HIM ON HIS OWN. INSTEAD OF BEING SPOON-FED WITH LECTURES, HE HAS HAD TO DIG IT OUT FOR HIMSELF. INSTEAD OF EMPHASIZING CURRENT THEORIES OF STRATEGY OR FACTUAL DATA THAT INFLUENCE TODAY'S OUTLOOK, WE HAVE FORCED HIM TO LOOK AT HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF STRATEGY. TODAY'S FACTS AND FIGURES ARE FRAGILE ITEMS. THE EXPERIENCES

OF YESTERDAY ARE THE BASIS FOR LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OTHERS.

AT THE SAME TIME, RECOGNIZE THAT WE CAN DRAW PARALLELS OR ANALOGIES FROM THE PAST ONLY WITH PERIL. TOMORROW'S EXPERIENCE CAN NEVER DUPLICATE YESTERDAY'S.

THE PROCESS, THOUGH, OF DISSECTING YESTERDAY'S HISTORY TO DETERMINE WHAT IS APPLICABLE TO TODAY, ALSO FORCES US TO DISSECT TODAY AND TO LEARN WHAT FORCES ARE REALLY AT WORK.

HEREIN LIES THE MAIN VALUE OF OUR HISTORICAL APPROACH. IT IS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL ATTITUDES FOR TACKLING A PROBLEM.

IT IS IN THIS HABIT OF DISSECTION.

IT IS THE DESIRE TO SEARCH FOR WHAT IS TRUE.

IT IS THE RECOGNITION OF A NEED FOR OBJECTIVITY.

IT IS PATIENCE AND A WILLINGNESS TO PROBE AND

PROBE FOR ALL THE FACTORS THAT APPEAR TO BE RELEVANT.

HOPEFULLY, IT IS ALSO APPRECIATING THAT THE ISSUES OF STRATEGY ARE FAR FROM BLACK AND WHITE, RIGHT OR WRONG. TODAY'S ENEMY IS TOMORROW'S ALLY. TODAY'S HERESY IS TOMORROW'S DOGMA.

YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND HAVE ALSO COME HERE THROUGH HISTORY TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF THRILL AND OF INTELLECTUAL SATISFACTION IN PROBING THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF STRATEGY. AND TO GAIN THE EVEN GREATER SATISFACTION OF USING YOUR SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP YOUR IDEAS OF VIABLE STRATEGIES FOR TOMORROW.

WE COULD HAVE OFFERED YOU A MORE COMPLETE PICTURE BY OFFERING A COURSE IN HISTORICAL STRATEGIC THEORIES FROM SUN TZU TO CLAUSEWITZ TO MAHAN TO DOUHET TO MACKINDER TO MAO AND OTHERS, YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF STRATEGY WOULD NOT BE ANY DEEPER, TODAY, EVEN THOUGH SUPERFICIALLY IT MIGHT SEEM MORE COMPLETE OR COHERENT. WORSE THAN THAT, YOU MIGHT LEAVE HERE BELIEVING THAT YOU HAD AN ADEQUATE GRASP OF STRATEGY. THAT WOULD BE A CATASTROPHE. YOU WILL ONLY BECOME A STRATEGIST IF YOU CONTINUALLY PROBE THE PAST AS PART OF YOUR EXAMINATION OF THE EVER-CHANGING PRESENT. AND TODAY'S TRUE PROFESSIONAL MUST BE A STRATEGIST.

YOUR MERE PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT IS WITNESS TO THE FACT THAT YOUR HUSBANDS ARE PART OF A DISTINGUISHED PROFESSION, NOT A CRAFT OR TRADE. A PROFESSION HAS A HISTORY. A LAWYER OR A DOCTOR MUST KNOW FROM WHENCE HIS SKILLS DERIVE. IT'S A FULL TIME JOB. A PLUMBER OR A MASON CAN WORK AN EIGHT-HOUR DAY, A FORTY-HOUR WEEK, THEN SHED HIS WORK CLOTHES AND

LEAVE THE JOB BEHIND. HE NEEDS ONLY TO LEARN THE SPECIFIC SKILLS OF HIS TRADE. THE MILITARY MAN, OF COURSE, REQUIRES CERTAIN TECHNICAL SKILLS. BUT, AS YOU ALL WELL KNOW, THERE IS MUCH MORE TO IT THAN THAT. HIS WORK IS WITH HIM NO MATTER WHERE HIS WORK CLOTHES ARE. THE WIFE OF A CARPENTER DOES NOT NEED TO KNOW HIS TRADE. SHE IS SELDOM WITH HIM WHEN HE PRACTICES IT. YOU ARE DIFFERENT. YOU WIVES MUST FULLY COMPREHEND WHY YOUR HUSBANDS ARE SO OFTEN CALLED UPON TO PERFORM THE STRANGE FUNCTIONS OF THEIR CALLING. THEY NEED YOUR SUPPORT. THAT IS WHY I HAVE BEEN SO ELATED AT THE TURNOUT FOR BOTH OF THESE EVENING COURSES.

WHEN YOU SIGNED ON FOR THIS ACADEMIC SOIRÉE, WE PROMISED YOU NO EXAMS AND NO REPORT CARDS. HOWEVER, IF YOUR INTEREST IN STRATEGY HAS BEEN WHETTED TO THE POINT WHERE YOU WOULD LIKE TO TRY YOUR HAND AT SOME RESEARCH LIKE YOUR HUSBAND, I WOULD ENJOY READING ANY PAPERS WRITTEN FROM YOUR UNIQUE POINT OF VIEW. IF ANY OF YOU WISH, THIS CAN BE YOUR RESEARCH PERIOD TOO. ANY TOPIC YOU LIKE WOULD BE FINE.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC WAS TO BRING THE MILITARY MAN HIMSELF INTO THE PICTURE AS ONE OF THE KEY ELEMENTS IN STRATEGY. YOUR BOOK WAS A NOVEL--SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT FROM THUCYDIDES WHERE YOU STARTED OUT.

WHY A NOVEL? BECAUSE WAR IS A VERY HUMAN AFFAIR. NOVELS CAN OFTEN TREAT THAT HUMAN ELEMENT BETTER, AND WE HAD BEST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE HUMAN FACTOR IN STRATEGY.

IN YOUR NOVEL WE SEE A GENERAL IN WORLD WAR I WHO IS CLEARLY UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO LOOK ON HISTORY WITH THE QUEST FOR TRUTH AND OBJECTIVITY THAT WE HAVE STRESSED AS THE CORE OF THIS COURSE. WE SEE HIM ATTEMPTING TO APPLY A STRATEGY THAT HAS BECOME BLATANTLY OUTMODED. EACH NEW COMBAT ACTION HE PLANS IS BLESSED WITH THE SAME FATAL ASSUMPTIONS. HE GOES FROM FAILURE TO FAILURE WITH GREATER AND GREATER LOSSES.

WAS THE MAN VENAL? STUPID? TOTALLY INDIFFERENT TO HUMAN SUFFERING? NO. FORESTER PORTRAYS HIM AS BASICALLY BRIGHT, ATTRACTIVE, SINCERE, AND WELL INTENTIONED. IF HE WAS WRONG, SO TOO WERE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS IN UNIFORM UP AND DOWN THE

LINE: AND SO WERE HUNDREDS OF CIVILIAN LEADERS, NOT TO MENTION THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PRESS, THE PUBLIC ET AL. THE ADVICE THE GENERAL GAVE WAS THE KIND THAT EVERYONE WANTED TO HEAR. IT WAS THE ONLY KIND THAT HE HAD BEEN CONDITIONED BY YEARS OF SERVICE TO GIVE. GIVING IT CARRIED HIM WELL NEAR TO THE TOP OF HIS PROFESSION. PERHAPS HE WAS SAVING HIMSELF FOR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MAJOR INFLUENCE, WHEN HE ROSE TO THE TOP. ISN'T THAT PREFERABLE TO BEING CUT OFF AS AN INSIGNIFICANT JUNIOR RENEGADE? OR IS IT THE CASE THAT WHEN PRINCIPLE AND REASONING ARE BOTTLED UP ALL THOSE YEARS ENROUTE TO THE TOP THAT THE BOTTLE MAY JUST GO "POOF" WHEN YOU OPEN IT UP TO POUR OUT THE ELIXIR OF PROGRESS AND REFORM? ONE NOTE ASIDE HERE, IF FORRESTER WAS ATTEMPTING TO PORTRAY THE TYPICAL "MODERN MAJOR GENERAL" OF THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, I HOPE YOU WON'T TAKE OFFENSE AT THE PORTRAYAL OF HIS WIFE. LADY EMILY IS SHOWN AS HAVING "A FACE NOT UNLIKE A HORSE'S", "A GAUNT FIGURE, STIFFLY CORSETED--ALMOST AN OLD MAID'S FIGURE. . .AND CAPABLE UGLY HANDS." I HAD A DIFFICULT TIME RELATING THIS PICTURE OF A STOICALLY SERVILE WIFE TO MY VIEWS OF A SERVICE WIFE. THERE IS A VERY GOOD NOVEL ENTITLED "ONCE AN EAGLE" BY ANTON MYRER WHICH I THINK PROVIDES A MUCH MORE EMPATHETIC VIEW OF THE MILITARY HUSBAND-WIFE TEAM.

YOUR HUSBANDS ALSO READ "THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE", STEPHEN CRANE'S FINE NOVEL OF OUR CIVIL WAR. MANY OF YOU MUST HAVE READ IT IN THE PAST. HERE, A SOLDIER'S BANDAGE WITH BLOOD SHOWING THROUGH SHOULD HAVE BEEN A BADGE OF DISGRACE. IT BECOMES INSTEAD A RED BADGE OF COURAGE. WHY? BECAUSE MEN REACT TO SYMBOLS AND OFTEN FAIL EVEN TO ASK, WHAT ARE THE FACTS BEHIND THE SYMBOL? BUT IN THIS CASE THAT BADGE OR SYMBOL TURNS A COWARD INTO A MANIAC OF COURAGE AND HERIOSM. IT SHAPES HIM INTO A MAN WHO WILLINGLY IS SEDUCED BY STILL ANOTHER SYMBOL, THE BATTLE COLORS OF HIS REGIMENT, INTO RISKING HIS LIFE WANTONLY FOR A FEW HUNDRED YARDS OF USELESS PASTURELAND.

IN ITS STARKEST COLORS, A LARGE PART OF THE GENIUS OF MILITARY LEADERSHIP HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO MOTIVATE MEN TO WORK AND TO SACRIFICE FOR GOALS THEY NEVER UNDERSTAND, AND WHICH OFTEN ARE IN FACT INCOMPREHENSIBLE. I AM NOT TALKING ONLY OF HERIOCS AS IN THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE--I AM TALKING ABOUT ESSENTIAL TASKS THAT ALL OF YOUR HUSBANDS HAVE PERFORMED, SUCH AS MOTIVATING A MESS COOK OR A BILGE CLEANER TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT HE DOES HAS A VITAL PURPOSE. MANY TIMES THAT PURPOSE IS THE SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT OF THE LEADER HIMSELF.

FOR INSTANCE, I ONCE HAD COMMAND OF A SHIP THAT WAS SCHEDULED FOR A MAJOR MODERNIZATION IN SIX MONTHS. ALMOST THE ENTIRE SUPER-

STRUCTURE OF THE SHIP WOULD BE TORN OFF AND REPLACED. YET, FOR SIX MONTHS I MANAGED TO MOTIVATE MY CREW TO REPAIR, REHABILITATE AND MAINTAIN THAT SUPERSTRUCTURE. ON THE VERY DAY THAT THE SHIP ARRIVED IN THE SHIPYARD THE CREW WERE STILL WELDING AND PAINTING ON IT. I EVEN FOUND ONE MAN ACTUALLY LAYING NEW TILE ON THE DECK OF A PAINT LOCKER WHICH WOULD BE DEMOLISHED WITHIN DAYS. DID IT REALLY MAKE SENSE? WHY DID I DO IT? OF COURSE, BECAUSE I WANTED TO ENHANCE MY REPUTATION AND CAREER. BUT--WEREN'T THOSE MEN BETTER OFF HAVING SOME SENSE OF PURPOSE AND INTEREST THAN BEING LEFT AIMLESS MIDST DETERIORATION AND INDIFFERENCE? ARE THEY TODAY, PERHAPS, BETTER SAILORS OR CITIZENS BECAUSE THEY LEARNED THAT IT IS PREFERABLE TO DO YOUR BEST AND TO FEEL PROUD RATHER THAN TAKE THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE?

BUT WHERE DOES THE LINE BETWEEN PROPER AND SELF-SERVING LEADERSHIP RIGHTLY FALL? WHAT IF I HAD BEEN ASKING SOME OF THOSE MEN TO SACRIFICE THEIR LIVES OR THEIR INTEGRITY TO WIN ME AND MY SHIP THE HONORS? IN THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE THAT MAY HAVE BEEN THE CASE.

A CLOSELY RELATED QUESTION IS WHETHER WE AS MILITARY LEADERS CAN SUCCEED IN GETTING MEN TO RISK THEIR LIVES WITHOUT OUR WAVING SOME RED BADGE OF COURAGE. CAN WE, INTELLIGENT

FROM OUR MEN USING ONLY REASON AND LOGIC--OR DO WE ALL NEED TO WAVE EMOTIONAL SYMBOLS TO PROPEL MEN INTO THE BASICALLY IRRATIONAL ACTS OF WAR? WHAT ARE A MILITARY MAN'S OBLIGATIONS TO RATIONALITY--? TO LOYALTY TO HIS SERVICE, TO HIS COMRADES, TO HIS COUNTRY? WHAT DO WE DO WHEN OUR SENSE OF INTEGRITY AND LOYALTY CONFLICT?

BOTH THE GENERAL AND RED BADGE OF COURAGE STRETCH OUT THINKING ON THE MORAL AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS WHICH ARE PECULIAR TO MILITARY MEN. WHY PECULIAR? BECAUSE WE MUST DEAL IN TWO REALMS OF MORALITY: THE PRIVATE AND THE PUBLIC.

NOW WE ARE BY NO MEANS THE ONLY PERSONS WHO FACE THIS DILEMMA. EVERY BUSINESSMAN HAS HIS PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITIES OR MORALITY BUT THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAYING:

"WHAT IS GOOD FOR GENERAL MOTORS IS GOOD FOR THE U.S.A."

AND SOMETHING LIKE:

"NATIONAL SECURITY IS ESSENTIAL TO THE PREVENTION OF OUR WAY OF LIFE"

THE FORMER IS USUALLY QUOTED IN DERISION, EVEN THOUGH THERE IS AN ELEMENT OF TRUTH IN IT. THE LATTER HAS A GREAT DEAL OF TRUTH IN IT, BUT HOW MANY TIMES IS IT QUOTED IN SUPPORT OF QUESTIONABLE CAUSES? THAT, IT SEEMS TO ME IS THE ESSENCE OF THE ISSUE OF THE PUBLIC MORALITY OF MILITARY MEN. THAT IS, HOW OFTEN DO WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE GREATER FREEDOM THAT MAKING

APPEALS TO PATRIOTISM GIVES US. WE WORK FOR THE STATE. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITION OF A STATE IS THAT IT ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE ITSELF AND THEREFORE THE WELL-BEING OF ITS CITIZENS. AS A RESULT WE COMMONLY CONDONE ACTIONS BY A STATE THAT WOULD CONTRAVENE OUR SENSE OF PRIVATE MORALITY. WAR ITSELF IS ONE EXAMPLE. PURPOSEFUL DECEIT IS ANOTHER. LET US TAKE THE RECENT CASE OF GENERAL LAVELLE, THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF SEVENTH AIR FORCE IN VIETNAM. IT APPEARS THAT HE DECEIVED HIS SUPERIORS AND EXCEEDED HIS AUTHORITY. THIS CLEARLY VIOLATES OUR SENSE OF PRIVATE MORALITY. WHY DID HE DO IT? FOR PERSONAL GAIN OR GLORY? IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT WAY TO ME.

CURIOUSLY, I HAVE NEVER HEARD A NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST SUGGEST IT. THEY HAVE NOT EVEN ASKED THIS QUESTION OR WONDERED WHY HE DID WHAT IT IS AVERRED HE DID DO. THE WRITERS IMMEDIATELY ASSUMED THAT BECAUSE HIS ACTIONS APPARENTLY VIOLATED OUR STANDARDS OF PRIVATE MORALITY, HE WAS DESERVING OF CONDEMNATION. PERHAPS IN GENERAL LAVELLE'S VIEW HE ACTED BECAUSE HIS SENSE OF PUBLIC MORALITY JUSTIFIED WHAT HE DID. PERHAPS HE FELT THAT THE NATION'S INTERESTS WERE ENDANGERED BY PROLONGING THE WAR AND WASTING LIVES BECAUSE OF THE WAY THAT WE WERE FIGHTING?

CAN WE NOT IN SOME SENSE SYMPATHIZE WITH A MAN WHO AT LEAST APPEARED TO BE TRYING TO SERVE HIS NATION'S SECURITY? EVEN PERHAPS ACCEPTING THE RESPONSIBILITY AND RISK OF DISAVOWAL AND

DISHONOR TO ACHIEVE WHAT SEEMED TO HIM TO BE IMPORTANT TO THE COUNTRY.

BUT, TOO, ARE NOT LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE THE HIGHEST MILITARY VIRTUES? DO WE NOT AS PROFESSIONALS ABHOR PRECEDENTS THAT BREAK DOWN THE FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPT OF SUBORDINATION IN OUR MILITARY WAY OF LIFE?

AND AT THAT PARTICULAR MOMENT WAS NOT GENERAL LAVELLE CLEARLY RUNNING COUNTER TO WHAT THE CITIZENS OF THE COUNTRY WOULD SUPPORT AS BEING IN THE INTEREST OF THEIR SECURITY? DID HE, THEN, NOT HURT THE IMAGE AND REPUTATION OF OUR ENTIRE PROFESSION, AND IN SO DOING VITALLY DAMAGE OUR ABILITY TO PRESERVE THE SECURITY OF THE NATION?

I SUPPOSE THAT THE KEY QUESTION WHICH WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES IS: DID GENERAL LAVELLE THINK THROUGH THESE IMPLICATIONS OF HIS ACTIONS BEFORE HE TOOK THEM?

DO EACH OF US CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE POSSIBLE CONFLICTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MORALITY BEFORE WE ACT? ARE WE AWARE THAT WE HAVE CHOICES TO MAKE THAT ARE ONLY BLURRED BY STIRRING SLOGANS SUCH AS "WHAT'S GOOD FOR GENERAL MOTORS ... " OR "NATIONAL SECURITY IS ESSENTIAL TO THE PRESERVATION ... " CAN WE LAY DOWN RULES FOR CONDUCT IN SITUATIONS SUCH AS THAT IN WHICH GENERAL LAVELLE FOUND HIMSELF? WHEN LOYALTY, PROSPECTS FOR PROMOTION, PUBLIC ACCLAIM OR OTHER FACTORS IMPINGE ON WHAT OUR PRIVATE CONSCIENCE TELLS US IS MORAL, OR RIGHT OR LEGAL?

OBVIOUSLY, THERE IS NO EASY ANSWER. IN MY PERSONAL VIEW THERE CAN BE NO RIGID FORMULA.

BE SURE, TOO, THAT YOU APPRECIATE THAT WE ARE NOT TALKING OF ISSUES THAT ARE CONFINED TO FOUR STAR OFFICERS. THESE CONFLICTS OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC MORALITY ARE WITH EACH OFFICER FROM THE DAY HE ACCEPTS HIS COMMISSION. YOU SIMPLY CANNOT LIVE IN AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE THE GLORIOUS PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION PERMITS SOME VIOLATIONS OF PRIVATE MORALITY WITHOUT IT SUBTLY AFFECTING OTHER STANDARDS.

YOU WIVES PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THIS AREA. WE SPEAK OF THE LONLINESS OF COMMAND--HOW THE OFFICER AT THE TOP WHETHER A DEPARTMENT HEAD ON A DESTROYER, COMMANDING OFFICER OR UNIT COMMANDER, HAS TO MAKE UP HIS OWN MIND. HE CAN'T PASS THE BUCK UPWARDS OR SHOW INDECISIVENESS TO HIS JUNIORS. QUITE OFTEN, IF YOU ARE STATIONED WITH HIM, YOU ARE HIS ONLY SOUNDING BOARD ON SUCH MORAL ISSUES. HOW ARE YOU EQUIPPED TO HELP HIM? WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR VIEWS, A SIMPLISTIC BLACK AND WHITE PICTURE OF GOOD AND EVIL? OR A REALISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONFLICTS WHICH EXIST IN THE REAL WORLD IN WHICH YOUR HUSBAND OPERATES?

ONE TYPE OF CONFLICT THAT YOUR HUSBANDS READ ABOUT IS THAT BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE AND TRADITION--BETWEEN

"WE'VE ALWAYS DONE IT THIS WAY" AND "WHY NOT. . . ." PROFESSOR ELTING MORISON PROVIDED SEVERAL ANECDOTES ALONG THIS LINE IN HIS BOOK. HE WAS AS CRITICAL OF THE CIVILIAN WORLD AS OF THE MILITARY. WHERE IS THE LINE BETWEEN RESISTING IMPROVEMENTS OR THE INEVITABLE, AND MISTAKING CHANGE FOR IMPROVEMENTS. MORISON AVERS THAT THE MILITARY AS AN INSTITUTION IS A SOCIETY THAT INHERENTLY RESISTS CHANGE TOO STUBORNLY.

HIS THEORY IS THAT WE ARE A SMALL SOCIETY UNTO OURSELVES, A CLIQUE; THAT ANY SOCIETY HAS AN INSTINCT FOR SELF-PRESERVATION; AND THAT PEOPLE ARE MORE CONFIDENT OF PRESERVING THEIR STATUS IF THINGS DO NOT CHANGE MUCH. HE HAS SOME CHOICE STORIES THAT SEEM TO BEAR THIS OUT.

ONE OF THESE INVOLVED ONE OF MY PREDECESSORS HERE AS PRESIDENT OF THE WAR COLLEGE, ADMIRAL WILLIAM S. SIMS (WHO ALSO HAPPENED TO BE THE FATHER-IN-LAW OF THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK). AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY CAPTAIN SIMS UNCOVERED A WAY TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN NAVAL GUNNERY. THE NAVY SOCIETY OFFERED ONLY UNREMITTING RESISTANCE. WHY? BECAUSE OUR NAVAL SOCIETY WAS STUPID? OR PROUD? NO-- BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO RESISTED HIM IDENTIFIED THE NAVY WITH PARTICULAR EQUIPMENTS AND PROCEDURES THAT WERE PART OF THEIR

OWN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. THEY SAW A CHALLENGE TO THOSE PARTICULARITIES AS NOTHING LESS THAN A CHALLENGE TO THE NAVY ITSELF AS FAR AS THEY WERE CONCERNED. CAN YOU IMAGINE SOMEONE WALKING IN TODAY AND TELLING US THAT ALL SHIPS ARE OUTMODED?--THAT THERE ARE NEW WAYS TO DO A NAVY'S TASKS? DO YOU THINK THAT OUR NAVAL SOCIETY WOULD RECEIVE HIM WITH OPEN MINDEDNESS AND JOY?

BUT SIMS DID SUCCEED. HOW? HE APPEALED TO AUTHORITY OUTSIDE THE NAVY, TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THIS LED TO A GENERALIZATION BY ADMIRAL MAHAN THAT NO MILITARY SERVICE SHOULD OR COULD UNDERTAKE TO REFORM ITSELF. IT MUST SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE. DO YOU REALIZE THAT? IS IT TRUE TODAY? DO YOU WANT TO ADMIT THAT WE CANNOT SHAPE OUR OWN DESTINY FROM WITHIN? AND IF WE CAN NOT, HOW IN THE WORLD DO WE OBTAIN THAT OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE? IN INDUSTRY YOU CAN TURN TO SOME OUTSIDER AND INVITE HIM IN, AT THE TOP. WE SELDOM HAVE INFUSED GENERALS OR ADMIRALS FROM OUTSIDE OUR TIGHT LITTLE SOCIETY. IF MORISON AND MAHAN ARE RIGHT, SHOULD WE BRING IN 50% OF EACH YEAR'S CROP OF FLAG AND GENERAL OFFICERS FROM CIVILIAN LIFE? CAN WE DO THAT IN WHAT WE CALL A PROFESSION?

ANOTHER CASE OF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN MORISON'S BOOK IS THE AMAZING TALE OF THE USS WAMPANOAG (NAMED FOR AN INDIAN TRIBE FROM THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY). SHE WAS COMMISSIONED IN 1868. SHE WAS STEAM PROPELLED. SHE COULD TRAVEL AT 20 KNOTS, WHICH WAS 5 KNOTS FASTER THAN ANYTHING AFLOAT. THIS IS A 33% SPEED ADVANTAGE. TODAY WE ARE PAYING HUGE SUMS FOR FAR LESSER SPEED ADVANTAGES. WHAT DID WE DO WITH THE WAMPANOAG, A SHIP THAT COULD RUN CIRCLES AROUND ABSOLUTELY ANY OTHER VESSEL AFLOAT? IN 1869, JUST A YEAR AFTER HER COMMISSIONING, WE LAID HER UP AND, LATER STILL, WE SOLD HER. WE DID NOT BUILD A SHIP OF HER SPEED AND MANEUVERABILITY FOR ANOTHER 20 YEARS. WHY? PROFESSOR MORISON SUGGESTS THAT THE NAVY HAD NO CONCEPT OF WHY IT NEEDED SUCH A SHIP. IT HAD NO MISSION INTO WHICH HER CAPABILITIES FITTED. THE REASONS GIVEN FOR ELIMINATING HER WERE SPECIOUS, BUT PERHAPS THE NAVAL SOCIETY WAS ACTUALLY REACTING WITH LOGIC AFTER ALL, AT LEAST UNTIL IT HAD THE FORESIGHT TO SEE WHERE THE NAVY SHOULD BE GOING AND WHETHER IT NEEDED WAMPANOAG.

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT? WHAT ARE TODAY'S ANACHRONISMS? YOUR HUSBANDS, WITH YOUR HELP, ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE THESE DECISIONS. THEY ARE THE ONES WHOSE TASK IT WILL BE TO SET THE COURSE FOR THE MILITARY OF THE FUTURE. TO DO

THIS THEY WILL REQUIRE A FINE KNOWLEDGE, NOT ONLY OF WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND OF WHAT OUR STRATEGY SHOULD BE, BUT OF HOW BEST TO MOLD TECHNOLOGY AND HARDWARE INTO THESE PLANS. IF A WAMPANOAG SHOWS UP TOMORROW--ON HYDROFOILS OR AS AN AIR CUSHION VEHICLE, OR SUBMERGED--THEY MUST RECOGNIZE IT AND KNOW ITS PLACE. FURTHERMORE, THEY MUST FIND THE MONEY IN OUR COMPETITIVE BUDGET FOR THESE NEW ITEMS AND SELL THEM IN THE WASHINGTON ARENA. THIS BRINGS US TO THE NEXT PORTION OF OUR NAVAL WARFARE COURSE. WE WILL START THE MANAGEMENT STUDY AFTER CHRISTMAS BY ADDRESSING THE NECESSITY FOR DEFINING THE PURPOSES AND THE OBJECTIVES OF MILITARY FORCES--PARTICULARLY OF NAVAL FORCES. YOUR HUSBANDS WILL THEN STUDY THE MACHINATIONS AND NUANCES OF THE BUREAUCRATIC BUDGETARY WORLD THAT SO HEAVILY DEFINES AND CONSTRAINS OUR FORCES.

I AM CONVINCED THAT WE NEED A STRONG MILITARY FORCE, NOT ONE FULL OF MILITARISTIC ANACHRONISMS BUT ONE WHICH IS CREATIVE AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OUR SOCIETY. I AM CONVINCED THAT YOUR HUSBANDS WILL BE BETTER QUALIFIED FOR THIS TASK BY HAVING ATTENDED THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE. AND, MOST IMPORTANT, THE OFFICERS WHOSE WIVES ARE IN THIS AUDIENCE WILL BE BEST QUALIFIED BECAUSE YOU LADIES HAVE CARED ENOUGH ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE DOING TO DEVOTE YOUR PRECIOUS TIME HERE.

LET ME CLOSE WITH A QUOTE FROM A LETTER FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF A DESTROYER TO A YOUNG MAN -- FIFTEEN --

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WHO HAD BEEN ABOARD HIS SHIP. THE BOY WAS INTERESTED IN ANNAPOLIS, AND IN THE NAVY AS A CAREER. THE COMMANDING OFFICER DESCRIBED ALL THE JOYS--"THE FUN AND ZEST" -- OF BEING A NAVAL OFFICER. THEN HE CAREFULLY TEMPERED THE ADVERTISING WITH FACTS ON THE HARDSHIPS OF SUCH A CAREER. HERE ARE THE WORDS:

"ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU ASPIRE TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER AS AN UNRESTRICTED LINE OFFICER, YOU MUST THOROUGHLY ENJOY THE PRACTICAL BUSINESS OF GOING TO SEA. SO MUCH SO THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO SPEND NEARLY HALF OF YOUR LIFE AWAY FROM YOUR HOME AND FAMILY. YOU MUST BE WILLING TO PLACE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO YOUR SHIP ABOVE ALL OTHER DUTIES; AND YOU WILL FIND THAT SHE IS A JEALOUS MISTRESS WITH UNENDING DEMANDS ON YOUR TIME, ENERGIES AND ATTENTIONS. YOU MUST BE ABLE TO BOTH GIVE AND CARRY OUT ORDERS WITH WHICH YOU MAY NOT WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREE AND, ESPECIALLY IN THE CONTEXT OF TODAY'S SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT, BE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOUR CHOSEN PROFESSION MAY NOT BE HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM BY THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE. YOU MUST BELIEVE COMPLETELY IN THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF YOUR COMMITMENT. IF AND WHEN YOU MARRY, IT MUST BE TO A WOMAN WHO HAS UNCOMMON COURAGE AND UNDERSTANDING AND WHO WOULD RATHER HAVE A WHOLE MAN PART OF THE TIME THAN PART OF A MAN ALL THE TIME, FOR SHE WILL BE EXPECTED TO CHEERFULLY ACCEPT EVEN GREATER SACRIFICES THAN YOU."

LADIES, THANK YOU.